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ABSTRACT

A study surveyed creative directors of top United States advertising agencies to provide an idea of the expectations and hiring practices for both copywriters and art directors in creative departments of those agencies. Results revealed that two-thirds hire creative personnel "right out of school," but that little if any formal recruiting is undertaken by their companies. Most have internship programs, and two-thirds said they have hired interns for full-time positions. Creative directors rated training at institutions such as the Art Center or Portfolio Center as significantly better than that offered at universities. Microsoft Word and QuarkXPress are preferred software programs for aspiring employees of a creative department. Both professional factors such as attitude and job performance, as well as executional factors, such as conceptual ability and creativity, were cited as "ideal" attributes of the entry-level creative hire. (Author/SR)

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Running head: HIRING ENTRY-LEVEL CREATIVES

Wanted: "Highly motivated, concept-driven stars" — Hiring preferences of top U.S. creative directors

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ABSTRACT

A survey of top U.S. agency creative directors provides an idea of the expectations and hiring practices for both copywriters and art directors in creative departments of advertising agencies. Results revealed that two-thirds hire creative personnel "right out of school," but that little if any formal recruiting is undertaken by their companies. Most have internship programs, and two-thirds said they have hired interns for full-time positions. Creative directors rated creative training at institutions such as the Art Center or Portfolio Center as significantly better than that offered at universities. Microsoft Word and QuarkXPress are preferred software programs for aspiring employees of a creative department. Both professional factors such as attitude and job performance, as well as executional factors, such as conceptual ability and creativity, were cited as "ideal" attributes of the entry-level creative hire.

Wanted: "Highly motivated, concept-driven stars" — Hiring preferences of top U.S. creative directors

Each year as graduating advertising students pack up their caps and gowns after a ceremonial rite of passage, some of those same students find themselves packing their portfolios in search of their elusive first job as a creative in advertising. Finding that first job, however, can be a full-time job in itself. While advertising agencies may search out top creative department personnel, with many jobs going unfilled (Cuneo & Gleason, 1996), entry-level creatives must do their own foot work to find a job (Donnelly, 1994).

Some agencies, however, have made the effort to search out new talent — or at least give them a chance. J. Walter Thompson periodically ran ads that invited those who wanted to try their pen at copywriting to "Write If You Want Work" (Johnson, 1990): "In the Thompson case, you had an advertisement created by an advertising agency seeking new advertising copywriters to come work for that agency. Left unspoken: Those who don't read ads need not apply" (p. 1, Tempo section).

Scott and Frontczak (1996) note that "the nation's advertising industry is at a point where it can demand high-quality applicants and, at the same time, can choose from an over-flowing pool of talented young people" (p. 42). While the estimates of advertising graduates vary widely depending on schools included — from fewer than 4,000 (Kosicki & Becker, 1996) to as many as 15,000 (Avery, 1991) — there is little question, as verified by our own students hitting the streets, it's tough to get a job in a creative department. In fact, of the entry-level job distribution, only 9% get jobs in creative (Donnelly, 1994). This fierce competition allows those hiring to pick and choose from among the very best job candidates.

However, for those who secure the initial job — and flourish at it — a creative position can be quite lucrative with an average yearly creative salary of $83,900. Top creative department hires can receive compensation as high as $875,000 (Flinn, 1996) — or even higher. In fact, Noreen O'Leary (1996) of *Adweek*'s staff quotes BBDO chairman Phil Dusenberry as saying, "I have always believed that writing advertisements is the second most profitable form of writing. Ransom, of course, is the first" (p. 34).

But to get the first job, copywriters and art directors must be pragmatic. Entry-level positions don't often serve up the big bucks, with beginning salaries in the low $20,000s (Flinn, 1996). These low starting salaries can

rise quickly, however, for those who are mobile and not afraid to jump from shop to shop. "It might reflect the oft-voiced complaint . . . that reasonable gains in salary only come by switching agencies or threatening to do so" (Flinn, 1996, p. 27). In fact, salaries in some agencies lag behind industry averages so that they, in effect, serve as "convenient farm systems for bigger networks scouting talent" (O'Leary, 1996, p. 34). Wasserman (1985) points out the down side of agency hopping, however: "People who change jobs a lot tend to make more money quicker, but the wear and tear on your psyche can be brutal" (p. 91).

But for the tenacious advertising students — those who spend the time getting an advertising degree and survive the tough, initial years — there is a payoff. Hunt, Chonko and Wood (1987) focused on long-term success (5+ years) and found that majoring in advertising was associated with long-term extrinsic success in the advertising profession. "In fact, our results show that advertising professionals who had formal academic programs in advertising were more successful than any other group studied" (p. 50).

Therefore, if getting the initial creative job is so difficult, what are those who hire entry-level copywriters and art directors — primarily creative directors — searching for? Obviously, the portfolio is most important [see Slayden, Broyles & Kendrick (1997) for what makes a good portfolio both in terms of concept and presentation]. But, beyond the portfolio, what piques a creative director's interest? That is, what do creative directors want in the people they hire?

While articles over the past two decades have addressed hiring of business students (Arora and Stoner, 1992; Boatwright & Stamps, 1988), marketing students (Gaedeke, Tootelian & Schaffer, 1983; Kelley & Gaedeke, 1990; Scott & Frontczak, 1996) and advertising students in general (Deckinger et al., 1989; Ducoffe & Ducoffe, 1990), few have looked specifically at the hiring of entry-level copywriters and art directors.

Industry newsletters and trade publications sometimes offer advice to students searching for entry-level creative positions in the form of tip sheets. For example, The One Club newsletter *ONE•TO•ONE* printed advice from a creative director whose first words of wisdom are "Be a shameless advertising whore. If you work at a big, bad place during the day, moonlight at a cool place after 6. Do it for no money. . . . Do anything to get great work done" (Slosberg, 1995, p. 12). While this may be sage advice — and is, no doubt, a way to a creative job — there are undoubtedly many other aspects that are considered in hiring art directors and copywriters.

For example, computer literacy has become increasingly important for the entry-level creative. Yet no studies reflect the computer software in which advertising agencies desire proficiency. One study, however, explored the programs academe has available (and one assumes teaches) in its labs (Kendrick, 1995). The following numbers represent art and word processing software programs with at least double digit percentages from 110 U.S. colleges and universities with student AAF chapters: for drawing, Adobe Illustrator (43.5%) and Aldus Freehand (37.0%); for desktop publishing, PageMaker (77.8%) and QuarkXPress (55.6%); for photo editing, PhotoShop (54.6%); for word processing, Microsoft Word (74.1%) and MacWrite (26.9%) — although 35.2% reported some other word processing program.

The importance of internships is another area discussed frequently. Avery (1991) noted that an internship is usually a summer job where an advertising student learns more than he or she contributes. "The important thing to remember is that the student is preparing for a career, and that an individual job or experience is not as important as the total package that will be presented after that person graduates with a baccalaureate degree" (p. 15). While some suggest that "the importance of internships to employment may be greatly exaggerated" (Donnelly, 1994, p. 55), most advertising executives recommend student internships as the best way to improve the chance of getting a job in advertising (Ducoffe & Ducoffe, 1990).

Individual attributes may also influence whether an entry-level position is attained. Ducoffe and Ducoffe (1990) found personal motivation and communication skills were the most important factors in explaining advertising agency executives' success. Also in that study, as one would expect, executives with a college education indicated that education was more important that those without a college degree. Perrin (1992), who proposes tough professional standards and certification for those entering the advertising business, has as his first "certification dream" requirement "a four-year university degree in course work approved by the. . .governing body [of selected academics from leading advertising schools]" (p. 157).

There is a perennial concern about recruiting top creative people. Centlivre (1988) said that "We're attracting the numbers people but not the brilliant creative people. The M.B.A.s! I've got nothing against M.B.A.s But M.B.A.s don't make ads. The whackos do! The cuckoos! The people who wear sneakers with a tuxedo" (p. 62). Those creative minds can be imperative to the success of the advertising agency. In fact, David Ogilvy (1988)

described the principal responsibility of the agency head as providing "an atmosphere in which creative mavericks can do useful work" (pp. 12-13).

Lareau (1983) reports that Ed McCabe, executive creative director of Scali, McCabe, Sloves, hires all kinds of people for his creative department. "I hire people who understand the real world. I've hired short-order cooks and cab drivers as copywriters, because I thought they had a terrific understanding of people, and they were great observers. They could say things that were colorful and real and relevant. I don't hire for accounts. Here, everyone works on everything" (p. 68).

Only a handful of studies have addressed skills and attributes specifically for creative hires. Deckinger, Brink, Primavera, and Katzenstein (1989) asked respondents (both teachers of advertising and those who hire their students) to rate 77 attributes on a 5-point Likert-like scale including cognitive, affective and conative attributes. Regarding creative writing, agency people (more than the academics) were concerned with qualitative capabilities and with attitude -- the *kind* of person — more so than the specific preparation from school. "Among the top qualities prized more by the recruiters than by the academicians were 'persuasiveness,' 'fits in,' 'sense of humor' and 'will stay with us'" (p. 42). It appears that agencies don't want prima donnas — at least not at the entry level. Attributes on which the two groups agreed were "writes well" and "creative/original." Overall, advertising agencies look for entry-level hires who are strategic thinkers and problem solvers as well as organized and "street smart."

Others also have noted the importance of a sense of humor. "It's pretty hard to succeed in any business without a sense of humor. And what with the Draconian whims of today's economy, which are often followed closely by behavioral changes in one's clients, being able to laugh becomes increasingly important. Especially for creative types" (Lareau, 1983, p. 70).

The purpose of this study is to focus on the hiring of entry-level creatives — both copywriters and art directors — by creative directors at the largest and most creative U.S. advertising agencies. This study was designed to examine the following:

- Hiring preferences of top creative management
- Profiles of recent creative hires
- Ratings of advertising programs at universities and specialized-training schools
- Recruiting practices by U.S. advertising agencies

- Importance of computer literacy and specific software preferences
- Ideal characteristics of entry-level copywriters and art directors

Given the lack of quantitative data concerning advertising agency's hiring practices — especially for creative departments — this study represents a new contribution to what is known about the preferences and practices of managers of the agency creative function. Its contents, in turn, will be an aid to advertising students pursuing creative jobs.

METHOD

Procedure

The mailing list for this sample came from two sources: the *Advertising Age* annual list of the largest U.S. agencies, and agencies that created winning entries in the *One Show* annual. Inclusion of the *One Show* agencies, whose number of personnel was often lower than agencies in the *Advertising Age* list, served to represent the hottest small creative shops in the country. Addresses were obtained from *the Standard Directory of Advertising Agencies*, and all envelopes were addressed to Creative Director. A total of 645 questionnaires was mailed consisting of 572 exclusively from the *Advertising Age* list, 28 exclusively from the *One Show* list, and 45 which were listed in both publications. Of the 570 questionnaires mailed with deliverable addresses, 139 (24.4%) were returned. Additional analyses and quotes have been published from this questionnaire involving verbatim comments to open-ended questions relating to the university's role in preparing copywriters and art directors for entry-level jobs (Kendrick, Slayden and Broyles, 1996a, 1996b) and what creative directors believe constitutes a good portfolio (Slayden, Broyles & Kendrick, 1997).

Subjects

The sample included respondents to a national mailing sent to creative directors at U.S. advertising agencies. By examining postmarks on returned questionnaires, it was found that most were returned from the northeast (35%) and midwest (28%) with a smaller number from the south (14%) and west coast (11%). The remaining surveys were returned from the southwest (4%), west (1%) or had no readable postmark (7%). Respondents in the sample who included demographic information included 120 men (88%) and 16 women (12%). The majority (82.3%) was between the ages of 35 and 54. The number of years respondents had worked in

advertising ranged was from 3 to 42, with a mean of 21.1 years and a standard deviation of 7.8. Most (88%) had undergraduate degrees, and 19% had graduate degrees. Another 29% had some specialized training.

Because the mailing specifically targeted creative directors, it is not surprising that a large majority (88%) indicated their current job title included some level of creative director (ranging from creative director to President/Executive Creative Director). More than half reported that their personal area of emphasis involved copywriting (64%), while 36% came from an art background. Other responses indicated a combination of art and copy or some other area (e.g., print or broadcast production). A wide variance was seen in reported agency size, which ranged from 2 to 750 employees with a mean of 99.0 and a standard deviation of 131.0. Number of employees in the creative department ranged from 1 to 200, with a mean of 22.7 and a standard deviation of 27.4.

Materials

In addition to the demographic and agency profiles outlined above, the questionnaire also contained items about types of agency accounts (creative driven v. service driven), types of work produced and annual capitalized billings.

In the questionnaire sections entitled "Hiring Preferences" and "Reviewing/Hiring Process" creative directors were asked to check which of a number of statements concerning the hiring of entry-level creative personnel applied to their agencies (e.g., We sometimes hire an entry-level copywriter "right out of school"). They also rated both universities/colleges and specialized training programs for both copywriters and art directors on a scale from (1) poor preparation to (5) excellent preparation. Creative directors were asked to describe their three most recent creative entry-level hires in terms of area (copywriter v. art director), sex, education and training. In addition, they were asked in which computer programs entry-level copywriters and art directors should be competent.

Finally, in the questionnaire section entitled "Your Advice to Educators and Students," creative directors were asked to complete four sentence stems: (1) The ideal candidate for an entry-level *copywriting* position at my advertising agency would be —; (2) The ideal candidate for an entry-level *art direction* position at my advertising agency would be —; (3) I'm most surprised (and pleased) when a newly hired *copywriter* —; (4)) I'm most surprised (and pleased) when a newly hired *art director* —.

Because we did not want to limit the range of responses, we chose to give subjects open-ended sentence stems rather than a checklist to complete. Although results of studies using checklists (c.f., Deckinger et al., 1989;

Arora & Stoner, 1992; Gaedeke, Tootelian, & Schaffer, 1983; Boatwright & Stamps, 1988) are intriguing, they are potentially misleading. In the present study we assumed that creative directors would be aware of attributes important to them in prospective candidates. Thus, the attributes collected in this study relied on the respondent's intuitive hiring preferences and are not filtered by a checklist.

RESULTS

Recent hires

When creative directors were asked to describe their three most recent creative entry-level hires, results showed that 58.8% were hired as art directors, 40.8% were hired as copywriters, and 0.4% were hired for a combination of art and copy. Of the 168 recent hires, 53% were women and 47% were men. Of a total of 103 recent art director hires, half (52) were women and half (51) were men. For recent copywriter hires, 57 percent were women (37) compared with 43 percent (28) men.

Hiring preferences

When considering hiring entry-level creative personnel, creative directors said that they would hire both copywriters (61.2%) and art directors (67.7%) "right out of school" (i.e., with an undergraduate degree). They were, however, less likely to hire entry-level creatives (copywriters and art directors both 37.7%) from specialized training programs such as Portfolio Center and Art Center College of Design (Art Center). The majority (76.2%) don't go to headhunters when hiring either entry-level copywriters or art directors. Overall, creative directors were unlikely to actively recruit for entry-level positions. However, those who do recruit tend to do so from specialized programs (15.4%) as opposed to universities and colleges (3.9%).

Variables related to agency size indicated that creative directors who reported hiring copywriters "right out of school" were from larger agencies (for number of employees, $t = 2.15$, $p < .05$; for number of employees in creative area, $t = 2.94$, $p < .01$; for annual capitalized billings, $t = 2.36$, $p < .05$). Similarly, art directors "right out of school" were more likely to be hired by larger agencies (for number of employees, $t = 2.15$, $p < .05$; for number of employees in creative area, $t = 2.18$, $p < .05$).

Hiring candidates from specialized programs was quite similar to hiring from universities. Copywriters were more likely hired by agencies with more employees ($t = 4.03$, $p < .001$), with more creative employees ($t =$

4.14, $p < .001$), and with higher annual capitalized billings ($t = 3.39$, $p < .001$). The same was found for art directors hired from specialized training programs. They also were hired by agencies with more employees ($t = 4.36$, $p < .001$), with more creative employees ($t = 3.27$, $p < .001$) and with higher annual capitalized billings ($t = 3.55$, $p < .001$).

Business-to-business agencies are less likely to hire copywriters "right out of school" (33.3%) than agencies with a range of accounts (65.8%, $x^2 = 5.89$, $p < .05$).

Creative-driven agencies are more likely than service-driven agencies to hire both art directors (48.6% v. 25.5%, $x^2 = 7.1$, $p < .01$) and copywriters (45.8% v. 29.1%, $x^2 = 3.7$, $p = .06$) from specialized training programs.

Creative directors who trained in specialized programs rated the preparation of art directors from universities and colleges significantly lower than did their counterparts who did not received specialized training ($t = 2.49$, $p < .05$).

A large majority of creative directors (81.2%) said that they have some sort of internship program, either every year or occasionally. While 11.7% said they had never used an intern, of those who have used interns in the past, 69.0% said that they have hired interns for full-time positions after graduation.

Creative directors, overall, rated advertising programs at specialized training centers higher than those at universities and colleges in how well they prepare entry-level creatives. On a scale from (1) poor preparation to (5) excellent preparation, copywriters from specialized programs were rated 3.7 (S.D. = 0.9) while copywriters from universities and colleges rated 2.3 (S.D. = 0.9). Similarly, art directors from specialized programs were rated 3.9 (S.D. = 0.8) while art directors from universities and colleges rated 2.5 (S.D. = 1.0).

Computer literacy

A large majority (86.2%) of creative directors emphasized the importance of computer literacy. When considering available software, it is clear that Microsoft Word and QuarkXPress are the preferred programs for the advertising industry (see Table 1).

Table 1 goes about here

Entry-level copywriters should be familiar with Microsoft Word. For entry-level art directors, however, a broader range of software proficiency is desirable. While Quark appears to be the industry standard, a knowledge of Illustrator and PhotoShop could also prove advantageous.

Creative directors whose departments stress computer literacy come from smaller agencies ($t = 2.13$, $p < .05$). While Freehand for art directors was only favored by one in four agencies, applicants for art directors at creative shops (33.9%) will find a greater value attached to their knowledge of Freehand than those for service-driven agencies (13.7%, $x^2 = 6.1$, $p < .05$).

Ideal characteristics of new creative hires

Table 2 contains results of a thematic analysis of four sentence stems completed by creative directors regarding ideal creative candidates and newly hired copywriters and art directors. For the purpose of analysis, a coding scheme used by Kendrick, Slayden and Broyles (1996a) was employed. In that study, categories included academe (curriculum and pedagogy), executional (conceptual ability and skills), and professional (selling self and real world). In the current study, no pedagogical issues were raised. See the appendix for coding categories, definitions, and sample comments.

For the current study, two categories were added to the original coding scheme under the "professional" category, and one category was deleted. "Selling Self," which focused on getting the first job, was deleted because the sentence stems referred to *after* the student had been hired. Added were:

- *Performance*. References to specific accomplishments on the job or the ability to do the job. Sample comments: "Take the ball and run with it," or "Good work immediately."
- *Life Experience*. Experiences other than school/training which make a new creative employee effective. Sample comments: "A very inquisitive and tenacious traveler of the world and literature," or "Smart about the world, products, people."

Table 2 goes about here

Overall, more than 90% of the stem completions fell into either the Professional category (237, or 52.0%) or the Executional category (206, or 45.2%). Only 13 comments, or 2.9%, addressing Academic concerns.

Within the Executional category of responses, the bulk of comments were about Concept/Strategy, Ideas/Creativity, Writing and Design. Within the Professional category of stem completions, comments from creative directors about Attitude and Performance dominated all other subcategories. See Table 3 for sample comments.

Table 3 goes about here

A comparison of creative directors' expectations of copywriters versus those of art directors yielded a few notable differences. While a total of 13 comments about desirable art director attributes specified computer skills, only one creative director said he/she considered computer skills "ideal" for a copywriter. Also, in the overall category of Performance, 55 comments were made regarding job performance by art directors, while only 44 comments were made about copywriter job performance.

Not surprisingly, mentions of writing skills were much more frequent for copywriters ($N = 31$), although 12 creative directors said they would be pleased to see writing skills in an entry-level art director as well. Likewise, three times more sentence stem completions referred to design skills as desirable for art directors ($N = 25$), although eight creative directors said they valued design skills in a copywriter.

DISCUSSION

Results of our national survey of top creative directors provide students and professors an idea of the expectations and hiring practices for the creative department of an advertising agency.

Creative directors continue to hire university grads. Although creative directors consider training at such institutions as Art Center and Portfolio Center to be superior to that in universities and colleges, they continue to hire more university graduates than those who have trained in specialized programs. This could be a reflection of the fairly small number of specialized program graduates on the market compared with the relatively large number of advertising majors graduating every year from college and universities. The undergraduate college or university degree emerges from this study as the ticket that allows an applicant to pursue a career. As more executives in advertising have college degrees, the college diploma is becoming a "union card" for the entry-level job.

Importance of creative internship programs. Results from this study emphasize the importance of creative internship programs — both to the student and to the agency. Only three agencies said they formally recruit at universities, yet 69% said they have hired interns for full-time positions. With so little formal opportunity to gain exposure to advertising agencies, students should be aware of the potential payoff for holding a creative internship while in school.

Don't expect to be recruited. The fact that agencies do little in the way of formal or even informal recruiting is not surprising, given the constant stream of portfolios submitted for review by would-be hires. Slayden, Broyles and Kendrick (1996) reported that agencies receive an average of one portfolio each day to review, and that nine out of ten are rejected quickly.

In recent years, primarily due to efforts of the American Advertising Federation (AAF) Academic Division, several large U.S. agencies have taken advantage of the efficiencies of national conferences and competitions to recruit top advertising undergraduates. Examples of these events attended in recent years by agency recruiters are the AAF's National Student Advertising Competition and the Most Promising Minority Students in Advertising program, both held annually.

Emphasis shifts once you get the job. Once a student lands an entry-level creative job in advertising, employer expectations shift from preparation for the advertising career to matters of job performance, attitude and conceptual ability. While the ever-important portfolio is the means of entry into the creative side of the industry (Slayden, Broyles, Kendrick, 1996a), the present study indicates that creative directors expect their new hires not only to *exceed* the bounds of their interviewing portfolio, but also to sustain their productivity and demonstrate that they can work in a team environment.

One aspect of the team environment is the ability to take criticism. Wasserman (1985) contends that the worst mistake many beginners as well as professionals make is to take criticism personally. "Always remember, you are you, your work is your work. Personal involvement is characteristic of all creative work, and it's impossible for many artists to separate themselves from their work. But ad makers are not artists; they are craftsmen paid to exercise their skill on behalf of an agency's clients" (p. 48).

Computer literacy: expectations vary. This study reported that computer literacy is important to four out of five creative directors. Microsoft Word and QuarkXPress are preferred programs, and entry-level art directors would

be well advised to be familiar with a broad range of software. When our results are compared with Kendrick's (1995) report that PageMaker remains the dominant graphics program among university computer labs, it appears that some universities might need to rethink their offerings to get in step with industry expectations.

In conclusion, this study offers insight into the crucial, if uneasy, alliance between academe and the advertising industry as they converge in the hiring of entry-level creatives. Advertising majors and their professors should be aware of hiring criteria by advertising agencies. One way is to become acquainted with results of this and other studies; another is to track the experience — good and bad — of a program's graduates with various agencies.

From the agency's point of view, success in the advertising business is impossible without continuous access to good creative talent. Centlivre (1988) described the creative department as a "leaky bucket. You've got to keep filling it up or it'll run dry" (p. 62). But perhaps one of advertising's stars, David Ogilvy, best expressed the importance of hiring creatives. Ogilvy (1988) stated that "my success or failure as the head of an agency depends more than anything else on my ability to find people who can create great campaigns..." (p. 17). Academic programs, too, are judged in part by how well they provide advertising agencies with creative talents who will craft the great campaigns of the future.

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APPENDIX

Coding categories, definitions, and sample comments from Kendrick, Slayden and Broyles (1996a)

CATEGORY 1: ACADEME

Comments referring generally to education, school(s) or the university

1.1 Curriculum

Comments about types of courses offered, specific programs or degrees offered

- Education should be general
  Definition: Education should focus more on liberal arts, less on skills courses.
  Sample comment: "Students focus too narrowly on advertising at the expense of broader learning."

- Education should be specific
  Definition: Ad majors need more specific training.
  Sample comment: "Need to learn all aspects of production, imagesetting and competent knowledge of film, photography and video."

- Education should be balanced
  Definition: Both liberal arts and advertising training are necessary for the ad major.
  Sample comment: "Providing a balance of mind-expanding and skills-oriented courses. Students are initially hired for skills, but will only keep their jobs if they can think resourcefully."

- Suggested courses
  Definition: Specific references to courses, both within and outside of communications/advertising, desirable for ad majors.
  Sample comment: "If a writer, need courses in art and marketing."

1.2 Pedagogy

Comments, evaluative and descriptive, about teaching methods or approaches, and faculty

- Course content
  Definition: Specific reference to what is taught in advertising-related classes.
  Sample comment: "Colleges teach all these David Ogilvy rules that mean nothing."

- Teaching methods/approaches
  Definition: How material is taught in advertising courses.
  Sample comment: "Forget 99% of textbooks, especially those over five years old."

- Faculty
  Definition: References to faculty, whether full or part-time, in ad-related classes.
  Sample comment: "Get people active in the field today to teach courses."

- Weeding out
  Definition: Suggestions that ad faculty should steer students without creative promise to other areas of study/work.
  Sample comment: "Tell the folks who are not creative to consider another career."

CATEGORY 2: EXECUTIONAL

Comments referring to specific tools necessary to work as an advertising creative

2.1 Conceptual Ability

Comments citing the importance of a conceptual grasp of advertising

- Execution vs. ideas
  Definition: Over-emphasis on style and degree of finish rather than on strategic thinking.
  Sample comment: "Sweating the execution and not the idea."

- Art vs. selling
  Definition: References to desire for pretty ads for creativity's sake, and in the process ignore that advertising must sell.
  Sample comment: "Believing advertising is an art. It's the ability to sell creatively."

- Concept/strategy
  Definition: Synthetic ability to come up with the big idea [concept] which will organize execution [tactics].
  Sample comment: "Stopping conceptual process too early–falling in love with their first idea."

- Think/thinking
  Definition: Ability to analyze and understand a problem/situation.
  Sample comment: "They spend too much time on mechanics and not enough time on thinking."

- Ideas/creativity/imagination
  Definition: Bringing a fresh perspective to an old problem/situation.
  Sample comment: "I want to be surprised by their creativity."

2.2 Skills

Comments focusing on the necessary technical skills to work as an advertising creative

- Computer
  Definition: References to computer skills or technology.
  Sample comment: "Increase time on computer skills and developing a thorough knowledge of the application."

- Grammar/spelling
  Definition: References to poor grammar and spelling.
  Sample comment: "Not learning basic grammar, spelling skills."

- Writing
  Definition: References to writing skills.
  Sample comment: "Puns."

- Design
  Definition: References to design skills, including computer design.
  Sample comment: "Because the computer has become so important in our industry — basics like good design, and understanding of typography are being less emphasized."

CATEGORY 3: PROFESSIONAL

Descriptive and evaluative comments relative to advertising as a profession or industry

3.1 Selling Self

Comments about presentational and experiential requirements for success in the job market

- Job-seeking skills
  Definition: Activities and preparation involved in learning about agencies, scheduling interviews, etiquette, writing letters, interviewing and follow-up.
  Sample comment: "Not doing homework on the agency they want to work for."

- Portfolio
  Definition: Mentioning the need for a portfolio, or addressing specific contents or criticisms of portfolios.
  Sample comment: "Students use classroom pieces for their portfolios, so they all look alike."

- Student attitude/personality
  Definition: Positive or negative comments/suggestions about student outlook/approach.
  Sample comment: "Teach them that perseverance and a good attitude is perhaps more important than raw talent."

- Career indecision
  Definition: Students who are undecided about which area of advertising to pursue.
  Sample comment: "Don't know if they want to be in creative or account service."

- Money/fame/title
  Definition: Motivated by the trappings of the profession rather than the substance [the work].
  Sample comment: "Worry about money too much. Worry about becoming a star early in their career."

3.2 Real World
References to work (as opposed to school) knowledge

- Industry knowledge
  Definition: Importance of basic knowledge of how advertising works and how agencies function.
  Sample comment: "Not figuring out or investigating what the agency structure is really like."

- Business aspects
  Definition: Financial aspects of the advertising industry such as budgets and dealing with clients.
  Sample comment: "Not being aware of the business side of the craft. Budgets, production aspects and working with clients are apparently not part of their education.. Should be."

- School vs. real world
  Definition: Comments that suggest student/faculty are not current with industry issues or practice.
  Sample comment: "Prepare them with real-life situations as opposed to theories and textbooks."

- Internships
  Definition: Comments that mention the need for an internship, suggests for an internship or the role an internship should play.
  Sample comment: "Work with agencies to get on-the-job training via internships."

- Real/reality
  Definition: Opposed directly yet generally to "ideal" to point out the limits and liabilities of the advertising profession.
  Sample comment: "Give 'real-world' assignments."

CATEGORY 4: OTHER

Abstractions, unclear or uncodable responses.

Table 1

Computer programs agencies like to see competence in for entry-level applicant
(Frequency and % who listed program)

	For copywriters		For art directors	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Microsoft Word	78	71.6%	14	12.4%
WordPerfect	25	23.4	10	8.8
QuarkXPress	16	15.0	105	89.0
Illustrator	6	5.6	72	61.0
PhotoShop	4	3.7	71	60.7
Freehand	1	0.9	28	24.1
PageMaker	3	2.8	18	15.5
Other programs	2	1.9	2	1.7

Table 2

The following table gives a breakdown of each of the four thematic categories as well as totals for each category grouping (such as "Curriculum" and "Pedagogy" category groupings under the overall category entitled "Academe"). The column headings "Ideal Copywriter," "Ideal Art Director," "Pleased When Copywriter," and "Pleased When Art Director" refer to the four open-ended sentence stems:

1. The ideal candidate for an entry-level *copywriting* position at my advertising agency would be —.
2. The ideal candidate for an entry-level *art direction* position at my advertising agency would be —.
3. I'm most surprised (and pleased) when a newly hired *copywriter* —.
4. I'm most surprised (and pleased) when a newly hired *air director* —.

The "Combined Copy" column contains the total number of comments in the two copywriter categories.
The "Combined Art" column contains the total number of comments in the two art director categories.
The "Total" column contains the total number of comments in each category across all four of the open-ended sentence stems.

	"Ideal Copywriter"	"Ideal Art Dir"	"Pleased When Copywriter"	"Pleased When Art Dir"	Combined Copy	Combined Art	
CATEGORY 1: EXECUTIONAL							
1.1 Conceptual Ability							
TOTALS							
Art vs. selling	2	2	6	8	8	10	18
Concept/strategy	12	15	9	8	21	23	44
Thinking	5	4	0	2	5	6	11
Execution vs. ideas	0	1	3	1	3	2	5
Ideas/creativity	10	7	7	11	17	18	35
TOTALS	29	29	25	30	54	59	**113**
1.2 Skills							
Computer	0	11	1	2	1	13	14
Grammar/spelling	1	0	2	0	3	0	3
Writing	22	5	9	7	31	12	43
Design	4	18	4	7	8	25	33
TOTALS	27	34	16	16	43	50	**93**
						CATEGORY 1 TOTAL	**206**

	"IDEAL COPYWRITER"	"IDEAL ART DIR"	"PLEASED WHEN COPYWRITER"	"PLEASED WHEN ART DIR"	COMBINED COPY	COMBINED ART	
CATEGORY 2: PROFESSIONAL							TOTAL
2.1 Selling Self							
Attitude	33	28	23	15	56	43	99
Portfolio	4	4	0	0	4	4	8
Money/fame/title	1	1	1	2	2	3	5
TOTALS	38	33	24	17	62	50	**112**
2.2 Real World							
Industry knowledge	2	1	3	2	5	3	8
Business aspects	4	2	3	4	7	6	13
TOTALS	6	3	6	6	12	9	**21**
2.3 Performance/Achievement							
Performance	26	28	18	27	44	55	99
Life Experiences	1	4	0	0	1	4	5
TOTALS	27	32	18	27	45	59	**104**
					CATEGORY 2 TOTAL		**237**
CATEGORY 3: ACADEME							TOTALS
3.1 Curriculum							
General	1	0	1	0	2	0	2
Specific	4	3	0	0	4	3	7
Balanced	0	0	1	2	1	2	3
Courses	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
TOTALS	5	3	3	2	8	5	**13**
					CATEGORY 3 TOTAL		**13**

	"IDEAL COPYWRITER"	"IDEAL ART DIR"	"PLEASED WHEN COPYWRITER"	"PLEASED WHEN ART DIR"	COMBINED COPY	COMBINED ART	
CATEGORY 4:							
OTHER							
Abstract, unclear, or uncodable	6	6	2	3	8	9	17
TOTALS	6	6	2	3	8	9	17
						CATEGORY 4 TOTAL	**17**
CATEGORY 1-4 TOTALS	**138**	**140**	**94**	**101**	**232**	**241**	**473**

Table 3

Sample comments from top categories of stem responses

Concept/Strategy

- *Have an understanding of concept and positioning.*
- *A strong conceptual thinker who can solve advertising problems verbally/visually.*
- *Strong, creative concepts.*
- *Solid, relevant in his/her concepts.*
- *A conceptual thinker as a great "writer."*
- *Someone with a grasp of strategic thinking and strong marketing concepts.*

Ideas/Creativity

- *Computer literate and imaginative.*
- *Produces good ideas and then is open to improving them.*
- *. . . has great energy and attitude and outstanding ideas.*
- *Presents a rationale (oral or written) for why he/she thinks an idea is great. Presents multiple options.*
- *Shows me a range of ideas.*
- *An idea originator. . . .*

Writing

- *Someone whose writing doesn't sound like advertising writing.*
- *Someone who already knows how to write well.*
- *Someone who has a grasp of the English language. . .*
- *Someone who loves to write and reads good writing.*
- *. . . able to write very well in a direct, down-to-earth clean manner.*
- *An idea originator with the word skills to express that idea effectively.*

Design

- *A gifted, well trained design professional...*
- *Great use of type. How do they handle a retail price and item print ad.*
- *Knew how to draw before computers and a love for classic typography.*
- *. . . a person with good design sense.*
- *. . . ability to add to verbal ideas visually.*
- *Designer with illustration skills (both computer and non-computer).*

Attitude

- *Curious, fun to work with, enthusiastic. . .*
- *Team player.*
- *Enthusiastic, mentally quick, not afraid of pressure/deadlines, eager to listen and learn, eager to...work.*
- *Doesn't bitch or complain about revisions or rejection.*
- *Eager, willing to do anything to get the job done.*
- *Someone willing to be 90% wrist and 10% brains to start.*
- *Can come back with great ideas after getting killed on the first round — they use criticism.*

Performance

- *Someone who has a flair for dramatic presentation.*
- *Computer literate, a person with good design sense and one who follows direction and is organized.*
- *Somebody with good ideas, good speed and a variety of abilities.*
- *Detail-oriented.*
- *A good listener, strong communicator with fresh ideas, an open mind, energy and determination.*
- *Bright, visionary, imaginative, loves to work.*
- *. . . excited about advertising and COST CONSCIOUS and ORGANIZED.*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE